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A few anecdotes and observations
relating to Oliver Cromwell

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A FEW

ANECDOTES

AND

OBSERVATIONS

RELATING TO

OLIVER CROMWELL

AND HIS

FAMILY;

Serving to rectify ſeveral Errors concerning Him, publiſhed by

NICOLAUS COMNENUS PAPADOPOLI,

In his

HISTORIA GYMNASII PATAVINI.

By a MEMBER of the ROYAL SOCIETY, and of the SOCIETY of ANTIQUARIES, of LONDON.

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A FEW

ANECDOTES

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OBSERVATIONS

RELATING TO

OLIVER CROMWELL

AND HIS

FAMILY.

NICOLAUS COMNENUS PAPADOPOLI, in his Hiſtoria Gymnaſii Patavini (Venetiis 1726,) Tom. 2. Lib. 2. cap. 50. pa. 306, 307. ſect. 241. ſub anno 1658, aſſerts "That Oliver Cromwell "(the Protector) was a Member of that Univer- "ſity in the Year 1618:" And He refers to a Liſt of the Engliſh Students of that Univerſity, and to Oliver's Coat of Arms painted in the Piazzas of it,

for Proof of what He has ſaid. The ſame Writer very ſoon after ſpeaks of Him, as having in the younger Part of his Life leſſened his ſmall Patrimony, by a diſſolute Life and by the Length of the Time that He continued abroad upon his Travels; Part of which Time, two Years at leaſt (He ſays) He ſpent in improving himſelf at Padua: And He fixes his Return into England, to that Year wherein King James the Firſt died, and King Charles the Firſt ſucceeded to the Crown; (which was the Year 1625.)

Papadopoli's own Words are theſe —— " 1658. " CCXLI. Oliverius Cromuel Britanniæ ſub nomine " tituloque Patroni Tyrannus, haud ſcio Dedecorine " an Gloriæ futurus Gymnaſio noſtro, cujus Illum " *Alumnum* inficias ire non poſſumus, cum et An- " glorum Catalogus, qui extat etiamnum *, Illum " ſuis annumeret *Conſiliariis* an. MDCXVIII, idip- " ſumque *Inſignia* ambulacris gymnaſticis appicta " teſtentur. Natus eſt in *Wallia*, obſcuro loco, nec " ditibus clariſve Parentibus aut illuſtri familia; " quamvis non deſint qui Pronepotem Illum exiſti- " mant Thomæ Cantabrigienſis Patricii, qui princeps " inter Miniſtros a cubiculo, præcipuus inter Con- " ſiliarios, præfectuſque ſecretis, Henrico VIII reg- " nante, inceſtarum nuptiarum Auſpex, tandem ſce- " lerum pœnas dedit, ac cervice gladio Carnificis " cæsâ probavit plerunque malis Conſiliis malos Auc- " torum Exitus reſpondere. Ut ut ſit, OLIVERIUS " natalem

* Apud viatorem nationis Anglicæ.

" natalem inopiam Adoleſcens auxit laſcivia et luxu " ac *diuturnis Peregrinationibus*, quarum Partem " PATAVIO dedit, *biennio ſaltem* bonis *hic* artibus " addictus: *Hinc in Britanniam regreſſus* eo anno " quo, Jacobo mortuo, Carolus Rex ſuffectus eſt." He then proceeds — " Ductâ Cantabrigiæ Uxore, " *Hac impellente*, ad gerendam rempublicam ſenſim " ac diſſimulanter acceſſit *&c.*" Then He gives his Character; concluding it with a Doubt whether He acknowledged any Deity but his own Intereſt; and yet allows that He had Virtues mixed with his Impiety and Vices, and wonderful Endowments of Mind. After which, He runs over his public Actions and his Exerciſe of Government, till his Death; which He fixes to have happened on the *4th of the Ides* of September, 1658, at *upwards of Sixty* Years of Age.

I don't mean to enter into any minute Criticiſms upon this Gentleman's Account. Therefore I will not pretend to diſcuſs " whether Oliver's ambitious " Views were or were not promoted by the Inſti- " gation of his *Wife*;" only obſerving in general, " that there ſeems to be * no ſufficient Foundation " for ſuch a Charge upon Her." Neither will I dwell upon the Error in the *Day of his Death*, or

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* The Biographical Dictionary expreſsly aſſerts " that She " had *no* Influence over him." Vol. 3. pa. 547.

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in the *Age of his Life:* though it is certain that He died on the *third* Day of September 1658, aged only a few Days more than 59 *Years and* 4 *Months*; whereas this Author ſays He died "*ſexagenario* "*major*, anno a cæde Caroli primi decimo, menſe "ſeptimo, die *quarto qui fuit Iduum* Septembris "an. MDCLVIII." (which I underſtand to mean the *tenth* of September, the Ides of September being the 13th) I ſhall preſently prove "that He was "born upon the 25th of April 1599:" So that He would have been but Sixty, if He had ſurvived till the 25th of April 1659. I ſhall alſo ſhew "that He was born at *Huntingdon*;" and not in *Wales* (as this Writer expreſsly aſſerts.)

However, all theſe are but ſmall Miſtakes, which a Foreigner might eaſily fall into.

But his GRAND ERROR (and which He not only aſſerts, but even imagines that He has fully proved,) concerns no leſs than ſeven Years of this Great Man's early life, and ſo eſſential a Part of his Education, as muſt have been greatly conducive to the forming of his Mind; and ſeems quite oppoſite to the real Fact.

So far was OLIVER CROMWELL, the *Protector*, from having ſpent ſeven Years of his Life (from the Age of 19 to 26) in his *Travels abroad*, and in ſtudying at *Padua*, that there is not the leaſt Shadow

Shadow of Reaſon to ſuſpect that He was ever out of theſe Kingdoms at all; much leſs for ſo long a Time, and in that Part of his Life; (which, on the contrary, appears to have been chiefly ſpent in or near the very Pariſh of his Nativity.)

Our Hiſtorians ſay He was entered at Sidney College in Cambridge * on the 23d of April 1616; being then juſt 17 Years of Age. About two Years after, in the Beginning of the Year 1618, He returned Home to his Mother. Soon after this, (at the Time when Papadopoli ſuppoſes Him to have been ſet out upon his Travels,) He was ſent up to Lincoln's Inn: At which Time, He muſt have been upwards of Nineteen. Here He remained ſome Time: It does not appear how long. But it could not be two Years: For He was turned of Nineteen, when He came thither; and He was married before He was Two and Twenty. On his Marriage, He ſettled at *Huntingdon:* And after his Uncle's Death, He removed no further than into the Iſle of Ely. Theſe Facts are † agreed by our Eng-

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* This is true: He was then admitted Fellow-Commoner, by the Appellation of "Oliverus Cromwell Huntingtonienſis, Tu-"tore Magiſtro Ricardo Howlit." But (having been entered a Fellow-Commoner) his Name occurs no where elſe but in the Regiſtry-Book.

† And yet it does not appear (upon Search) "that He ever "was admitted of Lincoln's Inn:" though his Son and Heir apparent, Richard, was ſo, on the 27th of May 1647; (and Mr. John Thurlow was one of his Securities.)

liſh

liſh Writers: It is ſufficient to ſpecifie two of the lateſt, *viz.* the New General Biographical Dictionary (Edit. 1761.) Vol. 3. pa. 516, 517, 518. Title, "Cromwell;" and Mr. Harris's Life of Oliver Cromwell (publiſhed in 1762) pa. 3. to 9.

I propoſe to confirm the *Improbability*, I might almoſt have ſaid the *Impoſſibility* of Oliver's long Travels during theſe particular ſeven Years, by a Proof from the REGISTER of St. John's Pariſh in *Huntingdon*, including the ſame ſpecific Years; a Copy of which Regiſter (as far as it relates to the Cromwells) I have obtained from Huntingdon, by the favor of a worthy and curious Gentleman of that Place, Mr. Edward Ferrar; who (by the way) obſerves that they have no Traces, in that Neighbourhood, of Oliver's having led a diſſolute Life.

This Extract from the Regiſter of St. John's Pariſh in Huntingdon, which Mr. Ferrar has been ſo obliging as to ſend me, includes Six of the Family, *prior* to the Protector Himſelf: But I will begin with Him, at preſent.

25th April 1599. Oliverius, filius Roberti Cromwell Gen. et Eliz. uxoris ejus, natus 25. April 1599. et bapt. 29.

22d February 1600. Margaret Cromwell, Daughter of Robert and Elizabeth.

2d January

2d January 1602. Ann Cromwell, Daughter of Robert and Elizabeth.

19th January 1605. Jane Cromwell, Daughter of Robert and Elizabeth.

18th January 1608. Robert Cromwell, Son of Robert and Elizabeth.

4th April 1609. Robert Cromwell *buried.*

2d June 1611. Joan Cromwell *married* to Mr. William Baker.

20th June 1617. Margaret Cromwell *married* to Mr. Valentine Walton.

Theſe that follow are (as I take it) the Protector's own Children.

8th October 1621. Robert Cromwell, Son of Oliver, Eſq;

6th February 1622. Oliver Cromwell, Son of Oliver, Gent.

5th Auguſt 1624. Bridget Cromwell, Daughter of Oliver, Eſq;

4th October 1626. Richard Cromwell, Son of Mr. Oliver.

20th January 1627. Henry Cromwell, Son of Oliver, Eſq;

2d July 1629. Eliz. Cromwell, Daughter of Oliver, Eſq;

8th January 1631. James Cromwell, Son of Oliver.

9th February 1636. Mary Cromwell, Daughter of Oliver, Gent.

Note; The three firſt of theſe eight were born *before* the Death of King James the firſt.

I flatter Myſelf, that it now ſtands ſufficiently proved " That Oliver Cromwell, the *Protector*, did " *not* reſide in *Italy*, but in *England*, during the laſt " 7 Years of the Reign of King James the firſt."

Papadopoli muſt conſequently be under a groſs Miſtake concerning the IDENTITY of the Perſon, at leaſt. However his Proofs do ſeem to ſhew " that " *ſome* Perſon of the *ſame Name* was at Padua at " that Time."

I was very deſirous to diſcover *what* Oliver Cromwell This was; and to that End, I made Inquiry after the Regiſter of *Hinchinbrooke*, where Old Sir Oliver Cromwell, the elder Brother of the Protector's Father, lived: But I am informed " that there " is * no Regiſter there."

* It is extraparochial.

This Old Sir Oliver ſold his Eſtate, in his own Life-time, to the Anceſtor of the now Earl of Sandwich: And I am told " that He *left no Children*". In his old Age, He lived at Ramſey: And Sir Philip Warwick * viſited Him there.

* Biogr. Dict. Fa. 5-1.

There

There was an *Oliver Cromwell Eſquire* of *Huntingdon*, who was a married Man in 1586, and till 1594: For in the Regiſter of St. John's Pariſh in Huntingdon it appears "that He had three Chil-"dren born there within that Space of Time;" viz.

25th Auguſt 1586. Henry Cromwell, Son of Oliver Eſq;
14th May 1589. John Cromwell, Son of Oliver and Elizabeth.
15th May 1594. Catharine Cromwell, Daughter of Oliver Eſq;

It does not appear *Who* this Oliver Cromwell *Eſquire* was. He might be Sir Oliver Himſelf (before He was made a Knight;) Who might have then reſided at * Huntingdon; and Who might have had ſeveral Children born, and even grown up, though None of them might live long enough to ſurvive Him. Sir Oliver was of a ſufficient Age of Life to be married, and have Children in thoſe reſpective Years: For his younger Brother, Robert, (the Protector's Father) was married and had a Daughter in 1593. One of his Sons might have been named *Oliver*; and would probably have been of a proper Age for ſtudying at Padua and making the Tour of Italy, between the Years 1618 and 1625.

* Hinchinbrooke is within a Mile of Huntingdon.

Though it might, in *bare Poſſibility*, have happened that Sir Oliver Himſelf did ſo, yet it is *very unlikely*, both from his Age of Life, (which could not then be leſs than ſixty or thereabouts,) and from his being ſettled at Hinchinbrooke long before that Time; where He gave King King James the Firſt, juſt after his Acceſſion to the Throne of England, the grandeſt Entertainment that had been given to a King by a Subject. In Reality, it can hardly be thought that this *Sir Oliver* ſhould be the Perſon who did not return from his Travels till the Year in which King James died and King Charles came to the Crown.

What *Other* Oliver Cromwell might do ſo, remains quite in the Dark.

There appear only three other Cromwells, in my Extract from the beforementioned Regiſter, Who were born *before* the Protector; (and they ſeem to have been an elder Brother and two Siſters of the Protector:) viz.

14th October 1593. Elizabeth Cromwell, Daughter of Robert and Elizabeth.

13th Auguſt 1595. Henry Cromwell, Son of Robert and Elizabeth.

7th February 1596. Catharine Cromwell, Daughter of Robert and Elizabeth.

I have

I have alledged One Fact, very material to the Point in queſtion, namely, " That Oliver Cromwell, " the Protector, was *married* before the Age of " twenty-two:" Which, it may be ſaid, I have not formally and directly proved. But I have ſhewn " that He had a Son (* Robert) born upon the " 8th of October 1621:" Which amounts to a ſufficient *conſequential* Proof " that the Father was a " *Married Man* ſome conſiderable Time before the " 25th of the preceding April". And " that He was " not two and twenty *till* the 25th of April 1621," is moſt clearly manifeſt from the Huntingdon Regiſter, which *aſcertains* his *Birth* to have been upon the 25th of April 1599.

N. B. This Regiſter *ſettles the* † *Doubt* amongſt our Hiſtorians, " Whether he was born upon the " ‡ 24th *or* upon the ‖ 25th of that Month."

Inner Temple,
24th June 1763.

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* This Robert died in his Infancy: And ſo likewiſe did his next Brother Oliver.
† See Biogr. Diſt. Vol. 3. pa. 516.
‡ According to Mr. Harris, pa. 1.
‖ So the Generality of Writers have ſaid.

P. S.

P. S. I will add, for the Curioſity of ſuch as attend to Heraldry, a Note of the Enſigns Armorial painted upon the Eſcutcheons uſed at the Protector's Funeral: viz. Impaled Baron and Femme, Firſt, for Himſelf, Quarterly, 1ſt and 4th Argent, a Croſs Gules (for England;) 2d Azure, a Saltire Argent (for Scotland;) 3d Azure, a Harp Or, ſtringed Argent (for Ireland;) In an Eſcutcheon of Pretence, Sable, a Lyon rampant Argent, (for his paternal Coat;) And, Secondly, for his Wife, Sable, 3 Leopards paſſant, in Pale, Or, ſpotted of the firſt. * The Crown over the Eſcutcheon was compoſed of Croſſes Patonce and Leaves, (like that of the Prince of Wales;) with an Arch joining croſſways over the red Cap of Velvet, but not riſing ſo high as the Regal Crown.

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* Note: He would not aſſume the Arms of France; being in ſtrict Alliance with that Crown.

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